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INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY Lebanon

CONFIDENTIAL

DATE DISTR. 18 August 1948

SUBJECT Activities of Lebanese Communists

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1. Tannus Diyab, a member of the Central Committee of the Lebanese Communist Party, has been appointed a "traveller" for the Communist Party, with the task of inspecting Party activities throughout Lebanon and of recruiting young men as Party members. Recently, the Party sent him to the Biqa' where he was successful in recruiting among peasants, laborers, and white collar workers. **Comment.** In April 1948 it was reported that Diyab had gone underground with Yusuf Hilu and that they had been assigned a special mission.)

2. The Communist Party has been instructed, in case of aggravation of the international situation, to make trouble for the British and the Americans by provoking disturbances among the masses and organizing terrorist bands. The task of organizing these bands has been assigned to Fu'ad Qazan. **Comment.** This statement appears to contradict the statement in **Comment.** that these terrorist groups are under Farajallah Hilu. An attempt is being made to check this information.)

3. On 15 July, Mustafa Aris, head of the Federation of Labor Unions, visited Prime Minister Riyad Sulh and told him that Communist Party members had decided to be faithful to the Arab cause in Palestine and were ready to join the Lebanese forces. Aris offered to unite the Communists for this cause, and at the same time he told Sulh that the Lebanese Government should stop persecuting Communist groups. Sulh asked Mustafa Aris whether the Soviet Legation had commissioned him to bring this message, to which Mustafa Aris replied that the Soviet Legation does not prevent Communists from fighting for their country and the Arab cause. Aris added that both Communist Moslems and Christians had authorized him to speak to Sulh on their behalf. Prime Minister Sulh then stated that he would take up the Communist question at a later date, after the Arab League Political Committee decisions had been published.

Comment.

the government ceased action against Mustafa Aris because of Moslem pressure and the threat of a strike by the Typesetters Union. Aris has resumed his Communist activities, using various

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disguises of Arab dress in order to conceal them from the Surets, and that he continues to contact members of the Soviet Legation. As of 26 July no orders had been received by the Surets to resume their attempts to arrest Aris. [REDACTED] on 20 July that Aris was still enjoying the immunity he owes to the backing of Riyadh Sulh.)

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4. During the week of 18 July, 41 prominent Communists signed a letter to President Bisharah Khuri, demanding the release of Communists who were still interned in the Ba'bek camp.
5. During the meetings of the Political Committee of the Arab League, which were held at Aley between 14-18 July to discuss the Security Council's Palestine resolutions, Ibrahim Khuri, Secretary of the Haifa branch of the Communist Party and now a refugee in Lebanon, was arrested by the Surets for attempting to gather information on every person entering the building in which the meetings were held, and for attempting to enter the building himself. Although Khuri denied any criminal intent, he was turned over to the Military Court.

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